



**mbae**  
MASSACHUSETTS  
Business Alliance for Education

2020 IMPACT



MBAE was honored to receive the 2020 Excellence Award in Advocacy from the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network for our work helping pass the Student Opportunity Act, legislation that increased funding for public schools, targeted the bulk of the new funding to districts serving students most in need, and ensured new funds will be effectively leveraged to close socio-economic and racial education achievement gaps.

## LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2020 was an extraordinary year as the world faced a public health crisis of unprecedented proportions. Families across the state faced significant challenges, from the loss of income, to the loss of a place to live, to the closure of the schools that provide their children with safety, food and stability. The disruption in education from the pandemic is so serious it jeopardizes the dreams and future success of a whole generation of students.

Coming off of 2019, a year that celebrated the passage of the Student Opportunity Act (SOA), legislation MBAE played a key role in crafting and getting passed, MBAE was poised to spend 2020 working to ensure the SOA delivers on its promise to close racial and socio-economic achievement gaps and workforce readiness gaps that stand as barriers to economic growth and social equity.

Yet, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a quick pivot to focus significant energy on ensuring continuity of high-quality learning opportunities—even in, and despite of, a global pandemic.

MBAE was one of the loudest and most consistent voices in education in 2020. We weighed in with evidence and data, calling on the state and districts to leverage every tool in their toolbox, and to create new tools if necessary, to stem the tide of pandemic-related learning loss. As you will read in this report, our impact was clear, definite and real.

The new year brings hope for an end to the pandemic. Yet, 2021 starts with students still experiencing significant disruptions in their learning that could impact them for a lifetime if we don't act urgently. MBAE's work, in partnership with you, has never been more important.

Our funders share our sense of urgency around these issues and strengthened MBAE's finances in 2020, providing momentum for the important work ahead. Their generosity allowed MBAE to complete a comprehensive strategic plan that provides us with a roadmap for continued growth and the capacity needed to implement a strong policy agenda in the years to come.

It will be needed. Excellence in education must be a core strategy for an equitable economic recovery and a just, peaceful society. MBAE is uniquely positioned to be a major player in the development of the plans and policies that make progress possible in 2021.

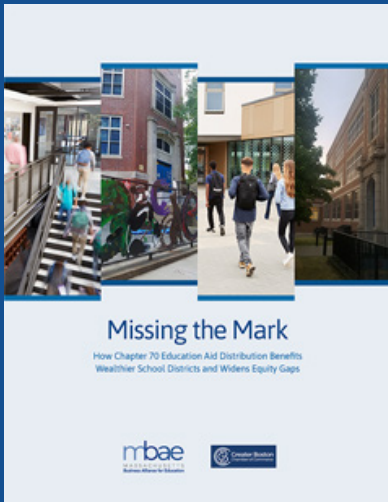
We are enormously thankful to the foundations and corporations that make what we do possible. Our 2020 accomplishments would not be possible without you.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Edward Lambert".

Ed Lambert

# FOCUS ON EQUITY



## MBAE report sounds alarm, stirs debate on inequities in state education funding

An MBAE and Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce report on state education aid distribution, which showed Massachusetts sends more aid to wealthier school districts than the state formula determines they need at the expense of increasing resources to low-income communities, defined the next big push on funding equity in the state. The report shaped public input received by the state on their own study of the issue which was delivered to legislative leadership on December 1, 2020 and which included recommendations drawn from our findings.

# 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## DRIVING IMPROVEMENT DURING THE PANDEMIC

### Spring database reveals many districts not moving learning forward

Acting quickly after schools closed in the spring due to the pandemic, MBAE created a database of remote learning strategies from the 20 largest districts in the state that showed half were not teaching new content. The database was the evidence used in a [Boston Globe Editorial](#) calling on the state and districts to do more to prevent setbacks in student learning.

**OUTCOME** Public awareness contributed to the Commissioner updating state guidance to recommend all districts move learning forward, rather than only review previously taught content.

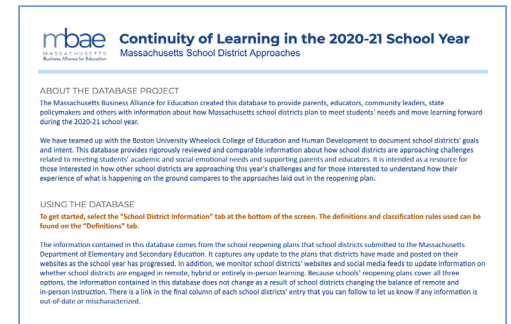
### Fall database uncovers unevenness in learning time, continuity of learning plans

MBAE's [database comparing 120 school district plans](#) for the 2020-21 school year highlighted wide variation in student learning opportunities and raised important questions about student access to live instructional time. The database earned significant media attention including a front page story in [The Boston Globe](#).

**OUTCOME** The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education responded by taking action to require all school districts to provide a minimum of 35 hours of live instruction over 10 days for students in hybrid districts and 40 hours over 10 days for students in remote districts.

### Leading the call to get students back on track

MBAE partnered with the Massachusetts Competitive Partnership to host two events with national and state thought leaders about the effect of lost-learning on students' future economic opportunities and on the innovation that will be needed to get students back on track. We issued a joint report, [Choosing A Return to Better: Moving Beyond Normal in the Commonwealth's Return to School and Learning](#), that recommended a focus on closing the digital equity gap, prioritizing college and career readiness, and promoting innovation and flexibility in our schools that serve students well-beyond the pandemic.



## COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

### **MBAE push to expand access to Early College leads to a new effort for students on the SouthCoast**

New data on Early College programs in Massachusetts, which are on track to double college completion rates among Black and Latinx students, led us to step up our support for expansion of these opportunities. MBAE hosted two events with partners to raise awareness of how these programs can help students earn a degree that could change the trajectory of their lives and help meet the workforce needs of employers. Our outreach to business helped lead the One SouthCoast Chamber of Commerce to create a new committee dedicated to supporting the expansion of Early College opportunities in New Bedford and Fall River. [Read more](#) about new Early College outcomes.

## DIGITAL EQUITY AND LITERACY

### **IT Bond Bill includes forward-looking measures MBAE has championed**

A \$1.8 billion bond bill was signed into law in August, 2020 that includes \$50 million for education-related investments and forward-looking language that reflects the type of vision for change that MBAE has long been championing. The bill encourages educators to think about how the use of technology during the pandemic can lead to new ways of teaching and learning in the future, and allows for training educators in developing rigorous digital curricula, supporting student enhancement of digital literacy, supplementing student assessment and creating opportunities for efficiencies and increased productivity.

### **MBAE named to legislative special digital equity commission**

MBAE will serve on a new legislative commission that will study student and family equity and access to broadband internet and make recommendations to address the digital divide. The commission's mandate also includes making recommendations to improve digital literacy education.

## DATA DRIVEN POLICY

### **Data Advisory Commission championed by MBAE is launched, includes a seat for MBAE**

An important measure MBAE fought to get into last year's SOA legislation was the establishment of a Data Advisory Commission that will advise the state on building a data infrastructure to better align taxpayer investments in education to results. MBAE Board Member Joe Esposito will represent us on the Commission which had their first meeting in December.

## ORGANIZATIONAL PROGRESS

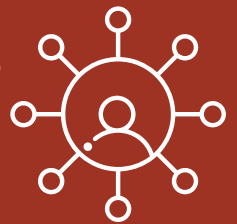
### **MBAE strategic planning process leads to five-year growth plan**

MBAE, with the support of an outside consultant, completed an organizational analysis in 2020 that affirmed the critical need for a business voice on education and workforce issues and led to the adoption of a new business model and strategic plan that will diversify our revenue streams, strengthen our team, and lead to greater focus on equity and talent pipeline issues.

## Keeping businesses informed and up-to-date

MBAE works for, with, and through our members and statewide business affiliate network to drive changes that benefit students, improve communities, fuel the state's workforce pipeline, and strengthen our economy.

36 affiliates  
+2 in 2020



31,000 COMPANIES  
REPRESENTED

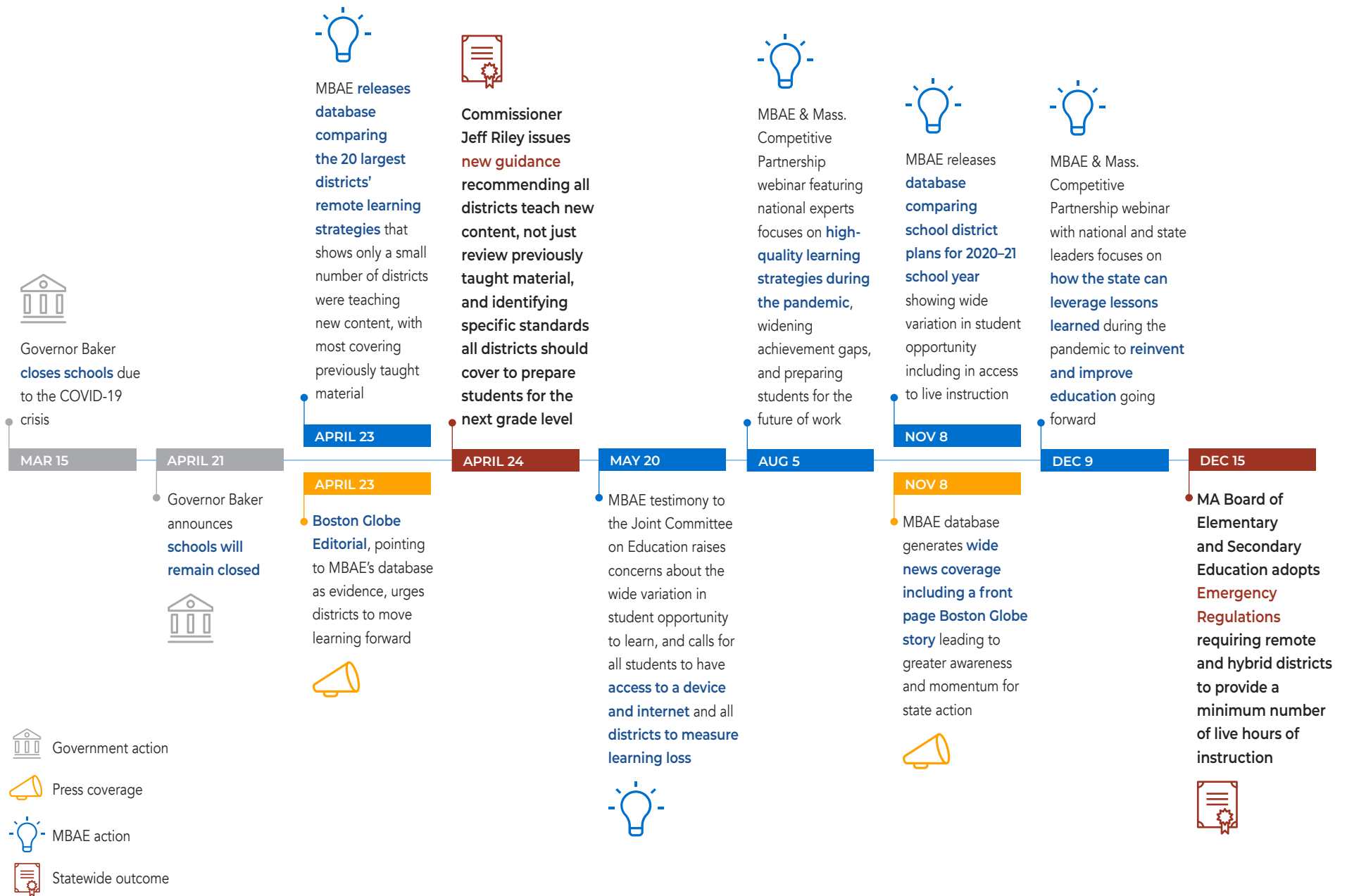


18 MBAE policy  
updates




12  
MBAE events &  
presentations

# TIMELINE: MBAE drives remote learning improvements for students

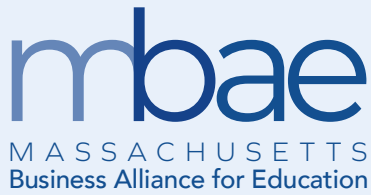


 Government action

 Press coverage

 MBAE action

 Statewide outcome



MBAE is the voice of the business community, solely focused on promoting excellence in public education—the essential foundation of a diverse, highly-skilled workforce, an equitable society, and vibrant communities.

#### MBAE STAFF

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#### CORPORATE SUPPORTERS



FOUNDED BY BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL AND MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL

#### FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS

